

Message Text

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TAGS: ELAB, JA

SUBJECT: KAIIN ATTACKS DOMEI POLICY

1. SUMMARY: KAIIN (SEAMEN: 160,000 MEMBERS) AGAIN PAINTED ITSELF AS BLACK SHEEP AT JANUARY 23-24 DOMEI CONVENTION. KAIIN VICE PRESIDENT AND ORGANIZATION BUREAU CHIEF KAZUKIYO DOI ATTACKED DOMEI'S 27 PERCENT SPRING WAGE STRUGGLE DEMAND AS INADEQUATE AND RESTATED KAIIN'S POLICY OF WIDENING POLITICAL CONTACTS AND SUPPORT BEYOND TRADITIONAL DSP TIE. DESPITE BRAVE TALK, POLITICALLY WEAK KAIIN GIVES NO REAL INDICATION OF STRAYING FURTHER FROM DSP. ECONOMICALLY WEAKENED BY 1972 NINETY DAY STRIKE (APPARENT CAUSE OF KAIIN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TURBULENCE), IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW UNION PLANS TO STRUGGLE FOR WAGE DEMANDS (42.7 PERCENT FOR OCEAN-GOING CREWS AND 48.2 PERCENT FOR COASTAL CREWS) FAR IN EXCESS OF EVEN MOST MILITANT SOHYO FEDERATED UNIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. RECENT DOMEI CONVENTION WAS LARGELY CEREMONIAL AFFAIR IN HONOR CONFEDERATION'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY. ONLY OPPOSITION TO DOMEI'S 1975 WAGE STRUGGLE POLICY CAME FROM KAIIN REPRESENTATIVE DOI WHO SAID 27 PERCENT DEMAND FAILED TO COMPENSATE WORKERS FOR INFLATION LOSS AND DID NOT ADEQUATELY PIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR INFLATION ON BIG BUSINESS. ON POLITICAL FRONT, DOI SAID KAIIN COULD NOT DEPEND ALONE ON DSP TO ADEQUATELY REPRESENT ITS MEMBERS' INTERESTS IN DIET. HE NOTED THAT DIFFERENT WORKING CONDITIONS OF SEAMEN GIVE RISE TO MANY SPECIAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROBLEMS NOT OF GENERAL CONCERN TO OTHER WORKERS.

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3. EMBOFF VISITED KAIIN INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS BUREAU CHIEF KOICHI KIHATA JAN 31 TO DISCUSS DOI STATEMENT. KIHATA (RECENTLY RE-ELECTED CENTRAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER AFTER LOSS OF POSITION IN 1972) SAID EXECUTIVE BOARD SPLIT 5 TO 5 BETWEEN THOSE LIKE HIMSELF WHO ARE DSP MEMBERS AND DOI GROUP WHICH IS NOT POLITICALLY AFFILIATED TO ANY PARTY. KIHATA IMPLIED THAT KAIIN WAS LESS POLITICALLY LEFT-LEANING THAN IT APPEARED FROM OUTSIDE EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM. HE NOTED 9 OF 10 KAIIN-BACKED CANDIDATES FOR APRIL LOCAL ELECTIONS WILL RUN ON DSP TICKET AND ONLY ONE AS INDEPENDENT. ALSO, KAIIN ELECTED MEMBER HARUO WADA TO DIET UPPER HOUSE IN JULY, 1974 ON DSP TICKET. WADA BARELY WON IN NATIONWIDE CONSTITUENCY WITH SIZEABLE HELP FROM OTHER DOMEI UNIONS.

5. KIHATA REFUSED TO BE PINNED DOWN ON SPRING WAGE STRUGGLE PLANS SAYING "OFFICIALLY" HE CANNOT DISCOUNT POSSIBILITY OF PROTRACTED STRIKE. HE SAID FACT THAT WAGE HIKES IN 1972 FAR EXCEEDED OTHER SECTORS SHOWED THAT THIS YEAR'S DEMAND IS NOT REPEAT NOT PIE IN SKY. WHILE CLAIMING BASIC WAGE DEMAND FOR 1975 A SHADE OVER 33 PERCENT, HE SAID NON-WAGE SPECIAL ALLOWANCES FOR SEAMEN INCLUDED IN 40 PERCENT PLUS OVERALL DEMAND MADE DIRECT COMPARISON OF WAGE DEMANDS WITH FACTORY WORKERS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE.

6. IN FEB 3 CONVERSATION, INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS TRADE SECRETARIAT TOKYO OFFICE SECRETARY MASUDA, TOLD EMBOFF RUMOR HAS IT KAIIN HAVE MADE OVERTURE TO SOHYO FEDERATED DOCKWORKERS (ZENKOWAN) TO ENGAGE IN JOINT ACTION. MASUDA SAID 1972 STRIKE WAS REALLY A DISASTER FOR KAIIN SINCE STRIKE UNDERCUT BY DOCKWORKERS WHO CONTINUED TO UNLOAD SHIPS FLYING FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE. MASUDA NOTED THAT KAIIN'S CUT-OFF OF DIRECT FUNDS TO DOMEI WAS ONE OF SEVERAL ECONOMY MEASURES TAKEN IN 1972 CONVENTION AFTER KAIIN ALMOST BANKRUPTED BY LONG STRIKE. INTERNAL POLITICAL TURBULENCE INCLUDING OVERTURNING OF DSP-AFFILIATED MAINLINE FACTION ALSO OCCURRED AT THAT TIME.

7. COMMENT: WITHOUT COOPERATION OF SOHYO FEDERATED TRANSPORT UNIONS INCLUDING DOCKERS, STRONG KAIIN ACTION EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. EMBASSY DOES NOT THINK KAIIN LIKELY TO MOVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BACK INTO SOHYO-AFFILIATED ALL JAPAN TRANSPORT WORKERS JOINT COUNCIL (ZENKOUN) FROM WHICH IT DISAFFILIATED 5 OR 6 YEARS AGO. FOR ITS SIZE, KAIIN IS POLITICALLY WEAK, EVEN AMONG PRIVATE SECTOR UNIONS, AND AT PRESENT APPEARS TO NEED DSP AND OTHER DOMEI UNION SUPPORT TO ELECT CANDIDATES FROM ITS OWN RANKS. HODGSON

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